

**A Case for Community Partnership and Professional Development:
A Nine-Week Service-Learning Seminar for Faculty**

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This paper presents a service-learning seminar for university faculty as a resource for fostering high quality collegiate service-learning courses and pedagogy. The authors frame service-learning within a sociocultural approach to learning and teaching, and discuss the challenges associated with effective service-learning pedagogy. Details of a nine-week service-learning seminar are described and voices of participants are presented to show the potential impact of service-learning pedagogy on university faculty, and perspectives on engagement with local community partners.

Service-learning pedagogy at the university level must be scrutinized to illuminate some of the best practices that encourage the depth of learning that service-learning can offer (Furco, 1996). The degree to which this learning is organized and supported by institutions of higher education is worthy of exploration. Even for schools that have a specific focus on service-learning, there is a need to break away from the age-old embodiment of the “ivory tower” and collaborate with community partners from asset-based perspectives (e.g., Clayton & Ash, 2004). Service-learning courses can provide prime opportunities for university students to develop awareness of issues addressing race, class, power, and privilege, as well as, a vision for community involvement (Furco, 2009). Further, these courses have become the catalysts for linking students’ content knowledge with their lived experiences through community partners (Butin, 2005; Ramaley, 2013). The quality of these courses is variable, however, and from our experiences, even at universities where students are required to take these courses, effective

service-learning pedagogy is in continual development.

Myriad reasons exist for the challenges of effective teaching of university service-learning courses, and there is certainly value in an analysis of the disconnect between university courses and the interests of a surrounding community. For this paper, however, we focus our attention on an actual service-learning seminar for faculty that strives to promote effective service-learning pedagogy. In the following sections, we contextualize our approach to service-learning pedagogy via our theoretical understandings of learning and teaching. We then highlight some of the key challenges facing the development of effective service-learning courses and university-community partnerships. Next, we describe the weekly meetings of the faculty seminar with an aim to provide a model for other universities to consider. Finally, we present voices of seminar participants to hear from faculty themselves some of the effects of the seminar on their teaching.

Theoretical Foundations: A Sociocultural Approach to Learning

Our discussion of effective service-learning pedagogy starts with a general perspective on learning. We frame our presentation of the topic within a sociocultural approach to learning (Nieto, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978). Namely, it is of utmost importance to view learning as a social process that occurs in multiple cultural contexts. These cultural contexts reach beyond the physical environment of a classroom, and are both fluid and multifaceted (Nasir & Hand, 2006). These factors are key aspects of our approach to service-learning pedagogy because they highlight the role of community contexts and students' multiple learning opportunities (Bowland, Hines-Martin, Edward, & Haleem, 2015).

The presentation of sociocultural learning theories in a college classroom comes with implications. Simply lecturing to students about the importance of learning from different contexts and different communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) is limiting, and perhaps even hypocritical. Although not always the case, lecture can reinforce a banking approach to teaching that reduces students to empty learning vessels (Freire, 1970). We acknowledge that the process is not this simple, and we acknowledge the importance of lecture at times during instruction. However, effective service-learning pedagogy begins with a sociocultural approach to learning and appropriate modeling of how this approach can play out in the classroom (e.g., Camangian, 2010).

This modeling involves a change in mindset from the professor "containing" the knowledge in the classroom to the social environment of the classroom creating space for learning to begin.

This often entails the utilization of multiple instructional activities during class, as well as a focus on the learning experiences upon which students can capitalize outside of the classroom. For example, in the classroom, continual opportunities for cooperative learning must be a mainstay of instruction (Ayers & Ayers, 2014). This can encourage students to share their own experiences and learn from one another while engaging in the content of the course. Further, activities and assignments must encourage students to reflect on their own learning via considering their own cultural and educational experiences, privileges, and backgrounds (Nieto, 2002).

Assignments must be designed to challenge students to apply their experiences and engage with chosen texts and classroom discussions. This interaction of the content of the course and students' experiences is necessary in the classroom to show that it is in fact a community of learners (including the instructor and community partners) that best makes learning happen (Wenger, 1998).

The fluidity of these learning opportunities (Bowland et al., 2015; Nasir & Hand, 2006) is another important facet of this approach to pedagogy. For the university professor in a service-learning course, this fluidity means that her students are learning from different experiences inside and outside of the classroom and constructing meaning about these experiences constantly. Students' identities as learners are continually developing as they participate in different learning environments, and a teacher who truly wants her students to learn all they can, will harness their potential to learn from different experiences and sources (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2001). This is

where effective service-learning pedagogy can have tremendous impact on students' perspectives about and abilities to learn from community involvement.

As stated above, there are inherent challenges when taking this approach to the classroom at the university level. First and foremost is the challenge that immediately arises surrounding classroom practice. For a professor to truly "walk her talk" in the classroom when presenting sociocultural approaches to learning, she has to broaden her view of learning to encompass different aspects of students' knowledges and lived experiences (e.g., Camangian, 2010); realize that she is not the sole creator/provider of knowledge in the classroom (Freire, 1970); and rely on multiple instructional techniques (Ayers & Ayers, 2014). This can be challenging because the majority of university faculty members are not teachers by training, and therefore may not have much experience with methods other than lecture (e.g., Chambers, 2012; Clayton & Ash, 2004; Furco, 1996).

Further, service-learning relies on a commitment from teachers and students alike to utilize the opportunities presented by community partners to promote learning. This takes the focus away from the professor and texts, for example, as the sole providers of knowledge, and looks to other resources as providers. This may require a step back from the rigidity of a syllabus that a faculty member has been using for years, and a look towards substantive, reciprocal relationships with students and organizations in the community. This takes work—a lot of work. And this is the type of work that faculty members "do on the side"—they are generally not paid extra and this work is often not

rewarded by university tenure and promotion processes (Furco, 2009).

The Challenges of Effective Service-Learning Pedagogy: University Overconfidence and Failure to Embrace Community Assets

Service-learning provides many universities with positive outcomes in the way of energized student learning, public relations material, and application of learning to social concerns (consistent with university mission statements) (Hall & Keen, 2009; McEwen, 1996). However, one of the tendencies that service-learning instruction must work to avoid is an *overestimation of the university's contributions* to the community and an *underestimation of the community's contributions* to professional and educational practice (Eby, 1998; McKnight, 1996). This misrepresentation can result in imbalanced partnerships, unrealistic expectations, and compromised outcomes. Even more problematic, it can perpetuate the stereotype of community members as needy and unsophisticated, and reinforce the "ivory tower" sense of elitism and erudition (Butin, 2005; Jones & Hill, 2001).

When universities overestimate the contribution they and their students will make in the community, they risk causing harm rather than helping their community partners (Eby, 1998). Beginning from the belief that their students' contributions are inherently valuable, faculty may overwhelm partner organizations with "anonymous volunteers"—students who may not suit the organization's interests, have no regard for the organization's procedures, and hold expectations that have not been explicated and

negotiated (Illich, 1990). Concurrently, students may be inclined to believe that they will be met with “red carpet” appreciation and that their preferences (e.g., schedules, projects) will be paramount. When this doesn’t occur, they can be quick to disparage the organizations.

Further, in the process of implementing service-learning, the exaggerated vision of the university’s contributions may lead faculty to neglect to provide students with orientation, training, project oversight, and opportunities for reflection (Eyler, 2002). Rather, students are sent directly into service, and may consequently compromise the organization’s work and even violate their procedures (Butin, 2005; Eby, 1998). In addition, without proper preparation for the related cultural issues, and mechanisms for reflection, students’ learning and performance is often limited (Jones & Hill, 2001). When conflicts arise from these challenges, university stakeholders can be quick to point the finger at the community. Sending ill-prepared students to serve at partner organizations can communicate disrespect for the work of the organization and can stunt students’ growth.

When overestimation of university contributions is accompanied by underestimation of community capabilities, service-learning’s potential can be dramatically curtailed (Eby, 1998). Common among service activities in many forms are participants’ motivations to “help the needy,” “make a difference,” or “give back,” rooted in a belief (albeit usually subconscious) that the “giver” has so much, and the “recipient” so little (Illich, 1990). Communities are often defined by their “problems” (e.g., poverty, drug use, crime, etc.); however,

this deficit orientation to community engagement only reflects a partial picture. Without recognizing the assets in the community (i.e., the people, cultural values, collectives, and structures that are positive resources), university solutions will inevitably be imposed upon the community externally, rather than cultivated from the assets within it (Borrero, 2011; Nieto, 2002). Given the partial nature of this foundation, these remedies are not likely to be successful, nor sustainable. Additionally, students involved in this work may go away having had their ideas of the community’s flaws unreflectively upheld, rather than critically examined. They may applaud themselves for “doing their part” or, when the outcomes do not rise to the level of “making a difference,” they may be prone to blame it on the already broken community (Leiderman et al., 2002). As such, the town-gown divide persists: us and them, servers and recipients, problem-makers and problem-solvers, the haves and the have-nots.

Therefore, the benefit of learning in a public sector context may be hindered. Discouraging as these circumstances may appear; each of them can be addressed, and consequently avoided, through appropriate faculty development resources. In particular, service-learning seminars can provide a forum for professors to explore pedagogy and practice together in an effort to hone their craft and cultivate reciprocal collaborations.

Method

To present the details of the faculty seminar and the voices of those involved, we collected data from a number of sources. First, through participant observation, we documented our participation in the development, implementation, and

refinement of the faculty seminar (see details below). This description is enhanced by our experiences as teachers (high school, undergraduate, and graduate level); an extensive review of the educational literature on service-learning programming and pedagogy; and continued conversation and collaboration with faculty and community partners.

The voices of faculty participants were gathered through semi-structured interviews about the seminar and its impact on their perceptions of service-learning pedagogy. We conducted interviews with eight participants who had completed the seminar in the previous five years. A list of participants was created to represent a range of disciplines and faculty ranks. From this numbered list, eight names were selected randomly and an email was sent asking for participation in interviews. All of those who were emailed agreed to participate in an interview. Of the eight participants, six identified as female and two as male. Participants included two adjunct faculty members, three assistant professors, two associate professors, and one full professor; and represented the following disciplines: business, computer science, education, ethics, leadership studies, and mathematics. Interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes were conducted on campus, and audio-taped for accuracy. The interview protocol asked participants to reflect on the faculty seminar in five specific areas: their vision of service-learning, course development, teaching service-learning courses, community involvement, and the role of university faculty in the greater community.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and then analyzed using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) by two raters: one author and one research assistant not involved with the faculty seminar. Each rater began analysis by reading and re-

reading transcripts and underlining recurring units (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988) from the data. Units were phrases, sentences, or longer quotes about participants' views of the seminar and service-learning pedagogy. Each rater then began categorizing the different units from a section of the data. This type of "open coding" was used to generate as many codes as possible (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The two raters then met to discuss their preliminary codes and began to investigate themes of the transcripts. Central themes were explored in depth (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and then raters re-read the transcripts for more selective coding—looking to identify commonalities and differences within themes. The raters then discussed themes and did one final read through, identifying quotes that spoke directly to the three themes: envisioning mutually beneficial service-learning, creating opportunities for reflection, and bringing community to the classroom. These identified quotes were selected for inclusion in the results section because they reflected the nature of a given theme (Glesne, 1999). These quotes are not necessarily representative of those from all participants.

The Service-Learning Faculty Seminar

The service-learning faculty seminar described below was developed through participation in a federal grant for the institutionalization of service-learning. Research by Furco (1996, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2009) demonstrates that faculty buy-in and investment in faculty development are key factors in the institutionalization of service-learning. Consequently, a consortium of six universities was formed to undertake strategies to enhance their campus' service-learning work. The group

represented small and large universities, public and private. The faculty seminar was a required part of the programming, and a basic template for it was provided by the lead institution. Each consortium member was free to modify it to suit their campus culture and needs, with the requirement that at least six faculty members participate each semester, over three years. The grant provided funding to pay stipends to participating faculty, although the amounts offered were determined by each campus. The seminar has evolved over the past six years to the current form described here.

The Service-Learning Faculty Seminar is a series of 9 two-hour sessions on the theory and practice of academically based service-learning in higher education. All university faculty are eligible, with priority given to tenure-track faculty (because they can propose new courses). Participants are chosen in a competitive application process in which they describe a course that they would like to create or modify to include (or improve upon existing) service-learning. The group size is intentionally kept small (approximately six to 10 participants) in order to foster exchange of ideas.

A syllabus for the seminar is provided to participants, which includes learning outcomes for each session, required and supplemental readings, and "homework." As with traditional classes, it is useful to schedule sessions as closely as possible (i.e., weekly) to foster synthesis of ideas, and to design a workload that is manageable in this time frame. Each session's homework consists of the construction of specific pieces of a syllabus, related to that session's content, such that a full syllabus can be assembled by the completion of the

seminar. Stated goals of the seminar are to: (a) foster multidisciplinary exploration of teaching and learning, (b) deepen understanding about service-learning pedagogy and practice, and (c) develop the practical tools of the trade (e.g., learning outcomes, reflection assignments, grading rubrics, stakeholder expectations).

Fundamental Theory and Practice

The first seminar session focuses on foundational service-learning concepts and procedures (Cone & Harris, 1996; Heffernan, 2001). Many of the hazards of overestimating university contributions and underestimating those of community partners are introduced in this session. The session begins with a personal writing activity in which participants are invited to think about the public purpose of their discipline and how they can be involved in activities consistent with it. Many realize that they may not have been socialized to think about this, nor prepared (in graduate school) to perform in this realm. This can be an important barometer of the participants' initial orientation to community engagement, which influences future seminar discussions.

Basic theories underlying service-learning pedagogy are explored, including elements of different definitions for service-learning, and how service-learning differs from other forms of experiential education and community engagement (see Furco, 1996). In addition, the six forms of service-learning as defined by Heffernan (2001) are explored. The basic tenets of service-learning (e.g., service matching course content, reciprocity, reflection, assessment, social issues education) are explicated and discussed in their practical forms (Furco, 1996; Howard, 2001).

A centerpiece of this foundation is the implementation of service-learning *partnerships* rather than *placements*. Faculty are expected to form relationships with their community partners and to negotiate with them the parameters of the service-learning undertaking consistent with the interests of the organization and of the university. This differs from the practice of sending students out to identify an organization that will receive them, absent the knowledge of the particulars of the course. The metaphor of the “textbook” is used in that service-learning is a text through which students will learn course material (Howard, 2001). Accordingly, faculty are to “choose the text” and be familiar with it rather than expect students to select it on their own. This promotes a better match between course content and service activities, and provides a context to design activities that will be meaningful for everyone involved. This focus on partnership underscores the fundamentals of community professional as co-educator; reciprocity; and learning constructed in the community, not just applied to it (Furco, 1996).

These lessons in service-learning basics culminate with a review of simple case studies in which the pedagogical fundamentals are present to greater and lesser extents. For example, scenarios depict inadequate communication between students, professors, and community partners; unilateral (i.e., non-negotiated) changes to projects; and insufficient or absent reflection. This provides the participants with the opportunity to consider some of the “problems” of service-learning, to identify the perpetrators (i.e., community partners are not always to blame), and to

construct ways to improve upon these circumstances.

Civic Engagement Foundations

The second session of the seminar focuses on the historical and philosophical origins of civic engagement in higher education. This is placed second in the seminar curriculum in order to allow faculty to explore their basic service-learning questions in the first session. Readings are used that stimulate discussion of the purpose of higher education; the extent to which it extends beyond the life of the mind to the development of the informed and active citizenry; and the elitism inherent in reproducing social norms through education (e.g., Astin, 1997; Battistoni, 2002; Fish, 2003; van Gorder, 2007). Faculty explore these issues according to their own personal perspectives of their work, their disciplines’ orientation to public good, and their beliefs about the academy’s obligations, broadly speaking. As with the writing activity in the first session, this creates a forum for participants to further consider the educational enterprise: who gets to create and transmit knowledge (i.e., who teaches), how and what do people learn, and what end is to be served by this education? These issues are the source of many of the potential shortcomings of service-learning (Eby, 1998). By discussing them through seminar literature and activities, faculty examine their belief systems and how their attitudes may conflict or resonate with service-learning fundamentals. Participants then examine their courses’ learning objectives, modifying them to reflect the integration of service-learning and relevant community lessons.

Partnership

The seminar session on partnership builds upon the prior session by

looking at the practical aspects of the creation and transmission of knowledge. Participants are reminded that service-learning is premised on reciprocity and balanced relationships (Bacon, 2002; Furco, 1996). This is explored through readings that elucidate community partners' perspectives in service-learning collaborations, as well as through a panel of community partners sharing these experiences face-to-face with faculty participants.

The readings assigned for this session shed light on the qualities that yield effective partnerships, as well as the numerous other ways in which community partners can be marginalized and disrespected (e.g., Eby, 1998; Leiderman, Furco, Zapf, & Goss, 2002). Fully understanding and embracing the notion of community partner as co-educator is often a significant shift for faculty. The seminar group examines ways in which course design does or does not lend itself to reciprocal collaboration with the partner. This always begins with the recommendation that faculty start cultivating their partnership in advance of the semester in which they will teach the course. In so doing, they have time to get to know the organization; to understand its policies, procedures, and interests; and to co-create a service-learning plan with the organization that is mutually agreed upon. Although subsequent seminar sessions will address pedagogical components such as reflection and assessment in more depth, faculty are invited at this stage to begin thinking about the role community partners can play in course components that occur throughout the semester.

These ideas are explored through the use of case studies. Examples arise in which the faculty member and

community partner are not in agreement (or even in communication) about the scope of the work that the students would undertake. As participants examine these case studies, new questions surface such as how to "fix" projects that have been derailed, how to design projects that are appropriate for students' abilities, and how to manage the different expectations each collaborator brings to the exchange.

After surfacing and wrestling with these issues as a cohort in the first hour, faculty are then joined by a panel of community partners. Panelists are prepared for the session with a list of guiding questions about positive and negative service-learning experiences they've had, preferences for their interactions with professors, and requirements they have for the collaboration. They may also explain their organization's history with university collaboration, shedding light on why there may be skepticism or resistance to university proposals and students. Panelists bring their own stories of successful and problematic scenarios, including situations when proposed projects did not match the organization's desires or student skills; and incidents when course assignments led to undermining/violating the organization's procedures. In both cases, resolutions are described that prevented the serious harm that could have been incurred by the organization, its clients, or the students. Through these examples, faculty are reminded to always request community partner input in such circumstances, rather than rely solely on students' accounts.

The assignment following this session is to write a list of issues faculty would negotiate with potential partners in planning for their service-learning course. This prepares them to

see the full range of details to be discussed in advance and to build in the avenues for input from the community partner.

Community Visit

The community visit session serves as an in-person case study. When faculty applicants are accepted into the seminar, they are notified that one session will extend beyond the two-hour time frame in order to take a trip to a community partner organization. At the beginning of the visit, seminar participants undergo orientation to the organization and the issues it addresses, thereby seeing one of the many ways partners educate students, and understanding the preparation students will receive outside of class. Faculty are often awakened to the richness of the learning environment at the community site, realizing that knowledge truly will be constructed and not just applied during service. They can envision a range of service projects and reflection topics, but will also be witness to why some projects are not reasonable, and why certain organizational policies and practices are in place. Accordingly, they are reminded of the serious work of the organization and the professional competence of its employees, and urged to make these aspects clear to their students. Partners tell the faculty visitors about the organization's expectations and requirements for service-learning and to demonstrate the extent of the investment organizational staff have to make to yield effective service-learning experiences. As with the preceding community partner panel, faculty can ask specific questions of the host partner, and refine their ideas about the type of partnership that will be reasonable for their courses. Depending on the timing of the visit, a lunch might be included

in that community, either at the organization or at a restaurant representative of that community's culture. Faculty return to campus to focus on the related homework assignments: (a) revisiting and modifying their learning outcomes, making them reflective of the lessons they now realize can be learned in the community; (b) amending their list of details to be negotiated with potential partners, having gained a glimpse of the type of service-learning their students might experience; and (c) estimating the scope of the students' service (i.e., either a number of hours of service or the extent of a service project, to be negotiated further with partners).

Student Perspectives

This session invites participants to consider how they can use service-learning orientation and subsequent activities and assignments to provide a forum for students to express service-learning concerns, explore related assumptions, and deepen their understanding of both curricular and co-curricular issues.

This session introduces faculty to the types of student development, beyond the academic, which can occur through service-learning. Among these are diversity and cultural competence aspects that must be considered for effective service-learning (Coles, 1999; Green, 2001). In order to understand these concepts, seminar participants are assigned readings that describe developmental theories related to moral reasoning, psychosocial formation, and cultural identity development (e.g., McEwen, 1996). Cultural issues are additionally raised through readings on the diversity features inherent in service-learning, be they racial, socioeconomic, gender, or otherwise (e.g., Green, 2001; Tatum, 1992; Williams & McKenna, 2002). Faculty

are challenged to consider their own understanding of these issues and their capacity to respond to the potential for service-learning to reinforce cultural biases and stereotypes, as well as power and privilege dynamics. Faculty are made aware of the research that tells us that significant transformations can be occurring beyond students' cognitive domain, as a result of their service-learning experiences (Eyler, Giles, Stenson & Gray, 2001). Thus, this session seeks to make faculty aware of this and to share some strategies, namely through reflection, to foster students' growth in these domains. Other topics for discussion in this session include students' attitudes about service, their approaches to the community, and their capacity for the proposed projects. Faculty discuss the power of having students critically examine their lenses into the community and their accompanying assumptions and judgments. Without this, and sufficient experience in the community, students' learning may be stunted.

In the second hour of this session, a panel of students joins the group to share perspectives on these issues. Like the community partner panel, they have been provided with guiding questions with which to prepare for the session. Speaking to the faculty participants, the students offer "true story" accounts of both positive and negative service-learning experiences. Their first-hand accounts illustrate the issues discussed in the first hour, be they pre-service anxiety, cultural assumptions, conflicts and performance concerns, or powerful transformations in their personal beliefs and decisions. When student panelists are not available, transcripts from previous panels can serve as case studies of

student-related issues and perspectives.

The ensuing homework from this seminar session is to create an outline for the way the orientation to service-learning will occur in class, and to define the expectations for student performance of service-learning.

Reflection

For the sixth session, assigned readings (e.g., Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Eyler, 2002; Johnson, 2006) describe the purposes of reflection, and its practical implementation. Building upon this, the group explores basic reflection formats (e.g., "what, so what, now what"), and reflection starters (e.g., standard exercises, use of quotes, etc.). These resources can then be marshaled to teach students to think and act reflectively.

Written reflection is the first technique explored in the session. Faculty participate in a written reflection activity, debrief it, and discuss alternative formats. This example is used to understand the importance of framing the reflective prompts using different modes of rhetoric, and the opportunity to explore a range of issues with one technique. The group discusses strategies for deepening the substance of what students write in journals and considers electronic journaling as an option (Mills, 2001). Interactive group activities are investigated next, meaning classroom-based mechanisms for verbal exchanges and other forms of idea sharing. Seminar participants receive a variety of samples and are introduced to repositories of additional reflection resources. Attention is paid to those activities that are introductory or preparatory, others that provide a degree of safety or anonymity, and options that showcase specific perspectives.

Reflection is a key area in which service-learning faculty can collaborate with their community partners (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999). Some partner organizations that have strong existing volunteer programs may already utilize reflective activities. Regardless of their experience with formal academic reflection, community partners can participate and add context to students' initial reflections, and may well be more familiar than faculty with volunteers' experiences, concerns, and reactions. As seminar participants plot openings for reflection throughout their curricula, they are invited to think about specific ways in which community partners can play a role (e.g., facilitating reflective discussions, providing a case study to explore, reading and responding to electronic journals).

The homework following the Reflection seminar session is for participants to identify the ways in which reflection will fit into their course timeline and to design at least one reflection activity.

Assessment

The seminar session on reflection is naturally followed by content on assessment. After service-learning faculty have designed reflective activities for their courses, they need to consider how they will assess the learning that is demonstrated through these activities (Bradley & Troppe, 1995). Seminar participants are reminded that service-learning grading is not to be limited to quantifying the number of hours a student has performed service, or whether he/she has written a high quality academic paper. Rather, service-learning assessment consists of evaluating the learning that occurs through synthesis of theory and practice, and is demonstrated in reflective assignments

(Bradley & Troppe, 1995; Clayton & Ash, 2004, 2005).

Borrowing from pedagogy used in expository writing classes, seminar participants are introduced to the use of rubrics for assessing the quality of students' reflections (especially in written form). Faculty are free to adopt sample rubrics, develop their own, or to choose not to use one, but the central point is to be clear with students about the components of quality reflection, and the criteria by which students' reflections will be graded.

In addition to exploring grading rubrics, this seminar session examines other learning assessment issues such as the proportion of the overall grade to be allotted to service-learning assignments; challenges assessing service-learning's more subjective outcomes (e.g., shifts in attitudes, awareness, and civic responsibility); and the roles community partners can play in evaluation. This session provides a forum for participants to consider the connections and the mechanisms by which community partners can provide useful feedback about student performance. Faculty are reminded of the many realms of student learning in which partners can provide valuable information (e.g., beyond academic comprehension to include students' professionalism, contributions to a successful project, and understanding of community dynamics). For example, many participants choose to dedicate a portion of the overall grade to the community partners' evaluations.

Seminar participants' subsequent homework is: (a) to determine how points will be allocated to service-learning activities (often consisting of multiple separate assignments or components), (b) to consider whether they'll use a grading rubric, and (c) to

propose ways in which community partners will be involved in assessment.

Discipline-specific content

Prior to the session, cursory research is conducted to identify sample syllabi and/or articles in each participant's subject area. Seminar faculty are presented with these resources as a symbol of the repositories that exist for further exploration, and as samples to be examined for the elements discussed throughout the seminar. None of the models are presented as ideals, but rather as templates from which they may draw ideas. By seeing these disciplinary compilations of the components that were discussed throughout the seminar, participants witness the elements' importance independently and collectively and gain new inspiration for their own syllabi. Participants are then given several worksheets to guide them through their course construction as a whole: what will students be learning? What types of service activities will cultivate that learning? How will they demonstrate what they've learned? What role will the community partner play?

Contrary to what may have begun as a limited set of potential learning outcomes rooted purely in the discrete subject, faculty are now invited to expand their outcomes beyond the academic, to include community, personal, and skill-based realms. Finally, they are charged with considering whether they will use student learning contracts and memoranda of understanding with community partners in order to seal the agreements made in the service-learning exchange. Samples of those created by current community partners are provided for their review.

As discussed below, the concluding session involves the presentation of the cohesive draft syllabus, so the final

homework assignment is to complete each of the preceding assignments and compile them into a comprehensive seminar portfolio.

Syllabus presentation

The final seminar session is a celebration of lessons learned by way of the presentation of the new syllabi created by faculty. Participants are expected to share their syllabi drafts as well as a document that provides an overview of each of the homework assignments (i.e., syllabus components). The latter is an invaluable measure of how much the faculty member's understanding of service-learning course construction has changed as a result of the seminar. By detailing how these syllabi components have transformed from original conception to this new draft, service-learning best practices in the making become apparent, bringing about a cause for optimism that the "problems" of service-learning can be avoided. Participants present the highlights of this transformation as well as areas in which they'd like additional feedback.

Findings: Service-Learning Pedagogy—Impacts on our Campus

At the time of data collection, the Service-Learning Faculty Seminar was finishing its sixth year at our university. During these six years, 59 faculty members (approximately 15 percent of all full-time faculty) from all five schools at the university participated, and more than 60 new courses were developed. University-wide, more than 400 students were enrolled in service-learning courses each semester. This is significant given the size of the student population—approximately 6,000 undergraduates.

In an attempt to offer insight into the seminar's impact on participants' perceptions of service-learning and their teaching, we interviewed faculty members about their experience in the seminar. Three prominent themes emerged from the interviews: envisioning mutually beneficial service-learning, creating opportunities for reflection, and bringing community to the classroom. We present these themes below with representative quotes from participants. These quotes are not presented to reflect all participants of the faculty seminar, but rather to share the voices of these eight faculty members and their experiences.

Envisioning Mutually Beneficial Service-Learning

All eight interviewees spoke of the seminar impacting their vision of service-learning as a symbiotic learning experience between the classroom and the community context. They distinguished service-learning from "volunteering" or "community service," and talked about the crucial role of the community partner in student learning. For example, one participant said,

Before the seminar, I didn't really understand the mutuality of the community partner piece.

Participating in the seminar I think was really helpful both in terms of understanding the theory of service-learning as well as trying to think more concretely about how to make the partnership piece really kind of come alive in my class.

Others shared this sentiment and talked about the seminar changing their perceptions of service-learning from one of "fixing" things in communities, to one of truly embracing the partnership of a community partner. When asked about specific aspects of the seminar that impacted their vision of service-learning, six of

the eight participants mentioned the readings and theoretical approach. One faculty member stated, "I didn't realize that service-learning was this whole branch of pedagogy, and it had its own literature—something like 20 or 30 years of research." Others talked about the importance of visiting community organizations and hearing directly from community partners.

Creating Opportunities for Reflection

When asked about how this vision for mutually beneficial service-learning impacted their teaching, all eight participants discussed the importance of reflection. They talked about their own reflection as teachers, their students' reflections, and the need to create more opportunities for reflection in their courses. In discussing his own learning and approach to service-learning in his courses, one participant stated,

... the different ways that you can incorporate reflection and some of that piece into your work is crucial. I think the seminar really helped with that. Like, you don't go to a community because there's something wrong with the community; you go to the community because there probably are needs that exist within the community but there are also assets that exist as well....The powerful piece is actually having the dialogue so you think about ideas and what would be a reflection activity or what would be a way to find out what great things people are doing.

Others spoke about reflection as a crucial component of their courses and general approach to making service-learning meaningful for their students. For example, business faculty talked about the importance of having students reflect on the business models

they were reading about in their texts and the models they witnessed with their community partners. The disparities were important aspects of student learning, and participants described the use of journals in their classes and continual opportunities for reflection for students—on their academic readings, their experiences with community partners, and the synthesis (or dissonance) of the two.

Bringing Community to the Classroom

In addition to course assignments promoting opportunities for reflection, all eight interviewees discussed the importance of bringing a sense of community into the university classroom. This happened on many levels, and interviewees shared that it was an important aspect of the seminar—all the way from the community that fellow faculty members created in the seminar itself to the inclusion of community partners in class content on campus (i.e., inviting community partners to come to class to speak/present/participate). One faculty member talked about the importance of building community on multiple levels: “I see it as concentric circles. You have to build the community within first. I have to build community in my classroom.” Echoing this sentiment, another participant shared,

It is extremely important that the students become part of the community that they’re working in. To model this, I try to form community within my classroom... By the second week, everyone is in a group in class, and throughout the semester they have group projects so they have that sense of community within the class whether it be case studies, their community work, or our assignments in class.

Another faculty member broke it down even further, and talked about building community via building relationships. He said, “It is all about trust. Even in the classroom, it just takes time to develop trust. So I think it’s something we’re always working toward and it’s always the goal of what we’re trying to do.” This connection of community to classroom practice shows that faculty members were thinking about the reciprocal relationships necessary for service-learning and how such relationships can be fostered in their classrooms and with community partners.

Discussion

There are numerous limitations to this study. Our sample is small and the experiences of these eight faculty members are inherently bound to the context of the seminar and the institution. Further, our sample selection was not entirely randomized—we sought multiple disciplines and faculty ranks—and interviews lasted only 30 minutes. For these reasons, our findings are not generalizable to other contexts. Future research can include more in-depth interviews with larger samples of participants and their reflections on different aspects of the seminar. For the purposes of this paper, the voices of faculty are limited to describing three themes—envisioning mutually beneficial service-learning, creating opportunities for reflection, and bringing community to the classroom. There were many other rich quotes to share from participants, and there is a need to further explore these themes and others in future research. We do feel that the themes and quotes speak powerfully to the impact of the Service-Learning Faculty Seminar at our university.

Proponents of service-learning rely on the notion that service-learning at the university level makes all the sense in the world (Butin, 2005; Furco, 2009; Tinkler et al., 2014). And we agree. College students are prime resources for our communities to engage in the type of authentic learning that can only come via immersion in real-world experiences that promote social justice. Likewise, college students are ripe for making the most of these learning experiences and applying new knowledge to the world that awaits them (Bowland et al., 2015).

However, to truly capitalize on all the potential that service-learning holds, service-learning pedagogy must improve. As we have shown in this paper, this is not an easy task. Along with the amazing potential of service-learning come inherent challenges. These challenges are certainly surmountable, but much work needs to be done. For service-learning pedagogy, we have attempted to address some of the common challenges to effective practice by highlighting a seminar for faculty at our university. We are clear that this is not the answer for every university, nor is this seminar perfect. However, we feel that it is a worthy step for universities who share similar vision and enjoy university-level support. We also feel that this seminar would be a great starting point for a new service-learning program or office that may not have similar structures in place in their immediate environment. We often wish that we had started with this seminar, built a foundation of strong pedagogical and partnership practices, and then established a program around our findings from its effectiveness and challenges. Our reasons for feeling this way lie at the heart of our reasons for writing this paper—effective service-learning starts with shared vision from

students, faculty, administration, and community partners. This shared vision needs time to come together and must be strategic. The seminar is one attempt to try to make this process transparent and offer time and space for its development.

On a broader level, service-learning pedagogy is significantly impacted by the university's requirement for students to take service-learning courses. We believe in this policy, but we also feel that this policy needs to be accompanied by both foresight and professional development to make service-learning teaching attractive and successful for faculty (Furco, 2009). If this can happen, we call upon university faculty to shift their mindsets to make community engagement a true part of the learning in their courses (Butin, 2005; Cone & Harris, 1996; Heffernan, 2001). This requires a genuine commitment to establishing and valuing community partnerships that share in student learning. Within the classroom, faculty need to embody a sociocultural approach to learning by incorporating multiple instruction techniques and creating a classroom environment that honors and promotes learning through social interaction (Borrero, 2011; Nieto, 2002). This does not only mean a step away from continual lecture, but also an attempt to make space for students to integrate their experiences from their work outside of the classroom—with community partners and more generally. It is in this space that students have the best opportunity to truly learn from their classes and their service, and build their own vision for community involvement. We feel that the seminar highlights pedagogy conducive to creating this level of value in service-learning.

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FACULTY SERVICE-LEARNING SEMINAR—SAMPLE SYLLABUS

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING PEDAGOGY

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will understand the basic components of a service-learning course and how they differ from other forms of service and experiential education.
- Participants will understand the opportunities and challenges of service-learning as a pedagogical approach to teaching any disciplinary content.
- Participants will explore a variety of personal philosophies of service-learning.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Cone, D., & Harris, S. (1996). Service-learning practice: Developing a theoretical framework. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 3, 31-43.
Reprinted in Campus Compact's (2000) *Introduction to Service Learning Toolkit*.
- Eby, J. (1998). *Why service learning is bad*. Retrieved March 2002, from http://www.messiah.edu/awgape/svc_learning/faculty/pdf/wrongsvc.pdf
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- Howard, J. (2001). Four myths about academic service-learning. And Three necessary criteria for academic service-learning. *Service-Learning Course Design Workbook*. University of Michigan: OCSL Press.

Assignments:

- Consider how your interest in SL is relevant. How will it help you to teach students the public purpose of your discipline? (Re)write the explanation of SL for your syllabus. Refer to your reasons for valuing this pedagogy and its relevance to your course.
- Seek and review service-learning resources in your discipline.

SESSION 2: THE ROLE OF SERVICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will compare and contrast a variety of perspectives on the role of higher education in relation to communities, student development, and service.
- Participants will explore the range of outcomes that can be realized via higher education commitments to civic engagement.
- Participants will further refine their own beliefs about the role of service in higher education and its value for their disciplines.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Astin, A.W. (1997). Liberal education and democracy: The case for pragmatism. In R. Orrill (Ed.), *Education and democracy: Re-imagining liberal learning in America* (pp. 210-211). New York: College Entrance Examination Board.
- Battistoni, R.M. (2002). *Civic engagement across the curriculum*. Providence, RI: Campus Compact

Fish, S. (2003, May 16). Aim low: Confusing democratic values with academic ones can easily damage the quality of education. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, C5.

van Gorder, A.C. (2007). Pedagogy of the children of the oppressors: Liberative education for social justice among the world's privileged. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 5 (1), pp 8 – 32.

Assignments:

- Review your explanation of SL in your syllabus. Is your rationale pedagogical, disciplinary, civic, spiritual, or some combination? Modify it to ensure that it adequately conveys the role of SL in your course.
- Make notes about ways your course will address SL outcomes and how you might assess for these outcomes.

SESSION 3: DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
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LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will understand the importance and qualities of collaborative relationships between community partners and faculty.
- Participants will formulate practical knowledge of the process for developing relevant (collaborative, mutually beneficial, etc.) partnerships.
- Participants will identify links between their course content and service-learning opportunities.
- Participants will begin to comprehend the ways in which community partners can be co-educators, including their role in reflection, assessment, etc.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Bacon, Nora. (2002). Differences in faculty and community partners' theories of learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 9 (1), 34-44.

Leiderman, S., Furco, A., Zapf, J., & Goss, M. Building partnerships with college campuses: Community perspectives. Council of Independent Colleges.

Assignments:

- Consider the type of partnership you will seek for your course context. Which aspects of your curriculum are you willing to share with partners as co-educators? Develop your approach (i.e., your "pitch") to community partners based upon what you will offer to them, what you will request of them, what information you need to know, etc. Make notes on this approach for future partner contacts. NOTE: Community partners will serve as panelists.
- Define what constitutes an appropriate (minimum and maximum) level of service for your course (i.e., the lower threshold necessary for student to learn, engage with community, etc.)
- Review website for subsequent community visit (&/or materials provided by organization).

SESSION 4: JOURNEY INTO THE COMMUNITY
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<u>What:</u>	Tour, discussion, and brief service at SL partner organization
<u>Where & When:</u>	TBD and will extend beyond usual 2 hour session

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will understand how service-learning course components come together by experiencing first-hand a service-learning community site and learning about the related curricular and partnership aspects.
- Participants will learn about the community partner role in the planning and implementation of a service-learning course.
- Participants will integrate into their curriculum design a basic understanding of students' experience entering the community, and community partners' perspectives on service-learning collaboration.

READINGS:

Bringle, R., & Hatcher, J. (2002). Campus-community partnerships: The terms of engagement. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58, 503-516.

Pearson, Nelda K. (2002). Moving from placement to community partner: A three-hatted view. *The Journal of Public Affairs*, 6, 183-202.

Assignments:

- Consider what your learning objectives will require of community partners as educators. Expand your list of topics to be discussed with potential partners accordingly.
- Develop a sample Memorandum of Understanding between you and (anticipated) community partners.
- Begin researching potential community partner organizations for your course.

SESSION 5: STUDENT PERSPECTIVES
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LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will learn how to use service-learning to address student learning needs.
- Participants will understand student issues in service-learning, including the need for attentiveness to diversity influences.
- Participants will establish syllabi and orientation to clarify SL rationale and expectations.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Clayton, & Ash. (2004). Shifts in perspective: Capitalizing on the counter-normative nature of service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 11 (1), 59-70.

Eyler, J., & Giles, D. (1999). Understanding and applying knowledge. In *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McEwen, M. K. (1996). Enhancing student learning and development through service-learning. In B. Jacoby and Associates (Eds.), *Service learning in higher education: Concepts and practices*. (pp. 53-91). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Assignments:

- Create an outline to orient students to service-learning at the beginning of the semester.
- Design your expectations for students regarding work with community partners (professional behavior, communication, accountability). Where in the syllabus will

you communicate these expectations? How will your assessment reflect their service performance? Note: Student representatives will serve as panelists.

SAMPLE SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:

- Coles, R. L. (1999). Race-focused service-learning courses: Issues and recommendations. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 6, 97-105.
- Eyler, J., & Giles, D. (1999). Personal and interpersonal development. In *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Green, A. E. (2001). "But you aren't white:" Racial perceptions and service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 8, 18-26.
- hooks, bell. (1992). *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston, MA: South End Press. Chapter 11. Representations of Whiteness in the Black Imagination.
- McIntosh, P. White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack
<http://www.utoronto.ca/acc/events/peggy1.htm>
- Tatum, B. D. (1992). Talking about race, learning about racism: The application of racial identity development theory in the classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62, 1-24.
- Williams, T. and McKenna, E. (2002). Negotiating subject positions in a service-learning context: Toward a feminist critique of experiential learning. In A. MacDonald and S. Sanchez-Casal, *Twenty-First-Century Feminist Classrooms: Pedagogies of Identity and Difference*. (pp. 135-154).

SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY READINGS FOR STUDENTS:

- Davis, A. (2006). What we don't talk about when we don't talk about service. In A. Davis and E. Lynn (Eds). *The Civically Engaged Reader*. Great Books Foundation.
- Cress, C., Collier, P.J, & Reitenauer, A. (Eds) (2005). *Learning through Serving: A student guidebook for service-learning across the disciplines*. Sterling VA: Stylus Publishing.

SESSION 6: REFLECTION

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will understand the central role of reflection within service-learning.
- Participants will examine various modes of reflection.
- Participants will consider reflection from the community partner's perspective.
- Participants will establish student reflection activities within their courses.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Bringle, R., & Hatcher, J. (1999). Reflection in service learning: Making meaning of experience. *Educational Horizons*, 179-185. Reprinted in Campus Compact's (2000) *Introduction to Service Learning Toolkit*.
- Eyler, J. (2002). Reflection: Linking service and learning – linking students and communities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58, 517-534.
- Johnson, C (2006). Deep learning and the big questions: Reflection in service-learning. In B.T Johnson and C.R. O'Grady (Eds.) *The spirit of service: Exploring faith, service, and social justice in higher education*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Mills, S. D. (2001). Electronic journaling: Using the web-based, group journal for service-learning reflection. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 8, 27-35.

Assignments:

- Identify where reflection will be most effective in your syllabus. Consider several forms of reflective activities that you might use, utilizing multiple modes of rhetoric and/or learning styles.
- Choose one of the identified points in the syllabus and develop a relevant reflection assignment/activity for it. What prompts will you provide?

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES:

Hatcher, J., Bringle, B., & Muthiah, R. (2004). Designing effective reflection: What matters to service-learning? *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 11(1), pp 38-36.

Reed, J., & Koliba, C. (1996). Facilitating Reflection: A manual for higher education. (Available online at <http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey>).

Giles, Eyler, Schmiede (1996). *A Practitioner's guide to reflection in service-learning: Student voices and reflections*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt (from a grant by the Corporation for National and Community Service)

SESSION 7: SERVICE-LEARNING ASSESSMENT

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will understand the importance of assessing student learning and service, and partnership dynamics.
- Participants will establish in their syllabi means for assessment of student learning and service, and consider ways to assess the learning that results from the community partner's influence.
- Participants will learn about means to incorporate community partner voice in assessment.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Bradley, J., Troppe, M.(1995) Connecting Cognition and Action: Evaluation of Student Performance in Service-Learning Courses. ECS/Campus Compact

Gelmon, S.B., Agre-Kippenhan, S., and Cress, C. (2005). Beyond a grade: Are we making a difference? In C. Cress, P.J. Collier, & A. Reitenauer (Eds). *Learning through Serving: A student guidebook for service-learning across the disciplines*. Stylus Publishing.

Assignments:

- (Re)develop your points breakdown, grading scale and rubric for grading.
- Identify ways to include community partner input into assessment. Add these to your list of topics to discuss with potential community partners. Reflect the community partners' roles in your syllabus.
- Finalize your syllabus for presentation in the final session.

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:

- Eyler, J et. al. (2001). *At a glance: What we know about the effects of service-learning on college students, faculty, institutions, and communities, 1993-2000*. Washington, DC: Corporation for National and Community Service.
- Moely, B.; Furco A.; Reed, J (2007). *Formulating a model of effects of college students service-learning experience*. Paper presented at ATINER conference in Athens, Greece.
- Moely, B.; Furco A.; Reed, J (2007). *Individual differences in college students preferences for community service activities*. Paper presented at ATINER conference in Athens, Greece.

SESSION 8: LINKING SERVICE-LEARNING TO DISCIPLINARY CONTENT

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Participants will analyze multiple possibilities for linking subject content to service-learning experiences.
- Participant will identify academic, community, and personal learning that can be achieved via service-learning activities.
- Participants will establish specific links within their syllabi between course content and service-learning opportunities, including appropriate learning outcomes.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Sample discipline-specific resources. Participants should consult disciplinary websites and publications for scholarship and sample documents pertaining to SL in their specific course subjects.

Heffernan, Kerissa. (2001). Implementation. In *Fundamentals of Service Learning Course Construction*. Providence: Campus Compact. (review for syllabus examples)

Palmer, P. (1997). Teaching and learning in community. From *About Campus*, November – December, 1997, adapted with permission from Palmer, P. (1997), *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Assignments:

- Draft learning outcomes for your SL course that reflect academic knowledge, skills, sensitivities, and lessons learned via community experiences (social issues, community perspectives, nonprofit realities, etc.).
- Draft your response to the five criteria that must be met in order to receive the SL designation.

SESSION 9: SHARING OF COMPLETED SERVICE-LEARNING SYLLABI

LEARNING OUTCOME:

- Seminar participants will share their syllabi and related materials with other participants, receive feedback and gain insights from their colleagues' work